



Environmental Issues in the Republic of Korea and the World Conservation Congress

IUCN Statement

13 July 2012

Dear friends in the conservation community,

IUCN will hold its World Conservation Congress in Jeju, Republic of Korea, in a little over seven weeks.

We have received a number of concerns recently on several environmental issues in Korea, including the Korean government's Civilian-Military Complex Port Development on Jeju Island, and the Four-Rivers project on the Korean mainland.

In addition, Korea's announcement last week on whaling and the continuing debate on tidal wetland reclamation mean that South Korea, like almost every country on our planet, has a number of significant environmental issues.

We understand and share the passion that people in our community feel about these issues. Vigilant citizens and organizations from around the world, constantly on the lookout for threats to nature and biodiversity, have helped us make progress in conservation. As we all know, there is a lot more to be done.

Some groups have called for IUCN to cancel the Jeju Congress, or hold it at a later date in another location. IUCN, as an open and democratic membership organization, provides a forum for all types of people and associations. The Jeju Congress will bring together thousands of dedicated conservationists from all over the world to debate, discuss, share and vote on our most pressing environmental problems and their solutions.

Although the Congress looks at issues from all corners of the world, including Korea, it is about more than one single country; it is about challenges and opportunities for conservation globally.

Unfortunately, no country has a totally unblemished record on the environment. Over the decades, deliberations and resolutions of IUCN Congresses have led to major positive conservation impacts all over the world, and often particularly in the host country.

We welcome you all to join us in Jeju – with NGOs, community associations, scientists, governments, businesses and media from all over the world – for open and constructive dialogue on these issues and many others.

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Director General, IUCN

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